

BRITAIN'S ULTIMATE CASTLE

WARWICK
✦ CASTLE ✦

BRITAIN'S ULTIMATE CASTLE: AN INTRODUCTION

There are a number of ways to find out more whilst at the Castle including the guidebook, audio tours, guided tours and interpretation signage



CASTLE TIMELINE STARTS HERE

Attacked in 1264, besieged in 1642 and damaged by fire in 1871, the castle has nevertheless gloriously survived the ever-changing fortunes of history.

The origins of Warwick Castle can be traced back to the Saxon fortification which Ethelfleda, daughter of Alfred the Great, used to defend against the invading Danes.

The first castle to appear on the site was a wooden motte and bailey constructed in 1068 at the command of William the Conqueror.

By 1220, the Castle had undergone a major transformation, as stone replaced wood as the principal building material. A 'shell keep', a circular tower with thick, crenellated walls and fighting platforms for its soldiers, topped the mound which was defended by a 7.6m stone curtain wall which surrounded it.



Throughout the 14th and 15th centuries, a massive rebuilding programme transformed Warwick Castle yet again. Two colossal towers that still dominate the east of the castle; imposing itself on the river was Caesar's tower with its stepped base; and to the right was twelve-sided Guy's Tower.

On 2nd March 1450, Henry VI conferred on Richard Neville, the husband of Anne de Beauchamp, the title Earl of Warwick. History was to know him better as Warwick the Kingmaker. The Wars of the Roses, which began in the early 1450's and ended with the battle of Bosworth in 1485, were a prolonged struggle for supremacy between the Houses of York and Lancaster. Neville's family connections made him a Yorkist. He held a command at the Battle of St Albans in 1455, which ended in defeat for the Lancastrians and with the capture of the hapless Henry. By 1461 the Yorkists had won the 1st war of succession and Edward, son of the Duke of York ascended the English throne. As a reward for his help, Warwick rose to a position of great power.

The World	At Warwick Castle
Battle of Hastings	1066
	1068 William I orders Castle to be built
Rome sacked by the Norman army	1084
	1088 1st Earl of Warwick created by William II
	1153 Garrison tricked into handing Castle to Henry of Anjou's men
King John signs Magna Carta	1215
	1264 Castle successfully attacked by John Giffard
	1268 The de Beauchamps succeed as Earls of Warwick
	1312 Piers Gaveston held at Warwick Castle prior to his execution
Scots defeat English at Bannockburn	1314
	1339
Kremlin built	1356
	French soldiers and nobles reputedly held as prisoners



**WARWICK
CASTLE**

The World

At Warwick Castle

c.1395

Guy's Tower completed

1431

Earl of Warwick supervises trial of Joan of Arc

1469

Edward IV imprisoned at the Castle

1471

Richard Neville, Kingmaker, dies at Battle of Barnet

1492

Columbus reaches New World

1572

Elizabeth I visits Warwick Castle

1604

James I grants Castle to Sir Fulke Greville

1642

Siege of the Castle by royalist troops

1707

Union of England and Scotland

1750

'Capability' Brown engaged to lay out grounds

1763

State Dining Room commissioned

1786

Conservatory built

1789

George Washington becomes 1st US President

1815

Napoleon defeated at Waterloo

1858

Queen Victoria lunches at The Castle

1861

Outbreak of American Civil War

Retaining portions of the mediaeval castle of the 14th century, the State Rooms have been extended, altered and embellished during virtually every century since to lavishly entertain the noblest of guests and to display the family's most prestigious possessions.

In the 1480's, the castle was held by the Duke of Gloucester, later Richard III and it was he who ordered the construction of an additional tower on the north wall.

When the Castle was besieged by royalists in the English Civil War, a number of defensive measures were taken. Cannon were positioned on the mound, and gun emplacements were established in the guard room at the top of Guy's Tower. By 1670, the building now housing The Gaol, was initially used as a laundry, wash house and brewhouse, had been built against the east wall between Caesar's Tower and the gatehouse.



The refurbishment of the living quarters began in the 17th Century and continued in resplendent lavish style throughout the 18th Century.

The State Dining Room commissioned by Francis Greville in 1763, the dining rooms were designed and built by some of 18th century England's finest craftsmen.

Since 1763, this room has seen some impressive dinner parties and some equally distinguished dinner party guests. On a visit in 1858, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert had lunch in this room before touring the castle ramparts in the afternoon.

In 1796, the entrance lodge and main driveway were constructed. By 1800, as seen from the outside, the Castle was as it is today, although a fire in 1871 meant that many of the private apartments had to be extensively refurbished.



WARWICK
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The World

At Warwick Castle

	1894	Engine House generates electricity to the Castle
World War I starts	1914	
	1923	Countess of Warwick becomes candidate for Parliament
World War II declared	1939	
1st man in space	1961	
	1978	Earl of Warwick's son, David, sells Castle
	1986	Victorian Rose Garden opened by HRH Princess of Wales
Berlin Wall falls	1989	
	1996	HM The Queen visits the Castle
HM The Queen's Golden Jubilee	2002	Mill & Engine House opens to public
	2007	'Dream of Battle' opens
	2009	The Castle Dungeon & the Princess Tower open

George Greville (1773 - 1816) showed an equal zeal for improving the look and style of the castle. He put the finishing touches to the State Rooms and bought many of the paintings and pieces of furniture now on display. Unfortunately, his enthusiasm ran somewhat ahead of his bank account. By 1804 he was forced to sell off outlying estates in order to keep himself solvent.

The Great Hall is the largest room in the Castle and through history has been its heart. The Hall as it stands today was first constructed in the 14th Century. It was rebuilt in the 17th Century. It was rebuilt in the 17th Century and then restored in 1871 after it had been badly damaged by a fire which swept through parts of the castle.



The Mill and Engine House reveals a little know chapter of the Castle's history and shows how the innovative and extravagant 5th Earl of Warwick was able to generate electricity for the Castle, including the lighting of the whole Castle for his wife's birthday. The Castle continued to depend on the Mill and Engine House for its electrical power until the arrival of mains electricity in 1940 which signalled the gradual demise of the plant, leading to complete abandonment in 1954.

The Castle was home to the Earls of Warwick until 1978.

Lord Brooke David Greville sold Warwick Castle in November 1978, after which it became a visitor attraction.

There has always been a royal interest in Warwick Castle, and in 1996 HM the Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh were given a tour of the two-year old Kingmaker attraction. It was on this visit that her Majesty unveiled a commemorative sword.

